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ECE 209-L

Professor Longley

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NEW BABY AND FAMILY REPORT

This is the story of baby Anaiah Bermudez Brown, daughter of Angelic (pronounced AN-ju-LEEK), aged 42, and Marty Brown, aged 51, little sister to Mikayla, aged 6. Baby Anaiah is of mixed race, as Mom is white Hispanic, and Dad is Black. Anaiah has beautiful curly hair and gorgeous cinnamon-shade skin tone. She was born on May 6, 2025, after a mostly uneventful pregnancy. That is, uneventful until the thirty-eighth week, when Anaiah became breached and had to be manually turned by the doctor. According to Mom, Anaiah showed her stubborn side by never showing her face during sonograms. Angelic was sure she was having a boy, possibly because already having had a girl, and knowing this would most likely be her last child, she wanted a boy. Regardless of her mother's desires, Anaiah has been loved by her nuclear as well as her extended family since conception.

I have known the Bermudez family for over twenty years. Angelic's grandmother owned their family's home for over twenty years before we moved into this block. Before her passing, Angelic's grandmother deeded the house to Angelic's older brother, Brandon. Their mother moved out and the house went through extensive renovations with Angelic serving as the overseer, right after she and Marty moved back to the block. They currently occupy the garden apartment, which is small for a family of four, but they have direct access to the backyard, their laundry room, (annexed to the back of the house), and a pretty shed they built at the back of the property. Angelic candidly told me during our interview that she and Marty do not need luxury; their main desire is to bring up their girls to be good, happy, moral citizens. One reason why I chose them was because Angelic, Marty, and Brandon are always doing good deeds for the people on the block. They take care of the tree wells, decorating for the different seasons, sweeping leaves, and even shoveling when needed. I think that having parents like these sets these girls up to be great adults, if they follow the parents' example.

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Angelic and Marty met while they were both stationed at a Naval base in Pensacola,

Florida, and have been together ever since. Marty was in the Navy for eleven years, and Angelic was in for four. Some of this time accounts for the fact that they became parents later in life, especially Marty. Angelic's one regret is not having had children at a younger age.

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During her pregnancy, Angelic was supported by her two younger sisters and her husband. There was even a group chat where she posted all her pregnancy-related appointments, and the others could agree as to who would be accompanying her. Her delivery date was May 9, but Anaiah was ready to make her entrance on the 6th, Angelic's last day at work before starting her maternity leave. In fact, an ambulance had to be called. Mom was already fully dilated by the time she got to the hospital.

Anaiah's and Angelic's first weeks at home went well, although Mom felt like breastfeeding was harder this time around. She felt mentally exhausted, physically drained, and had to deal with her pregnancy weight gain of fifty pounds. Despite these challenges she had good, fast healing. Of course, her family was there by her side. Mikayla is allergic to dairy and eggs, which made Angelic be on guard once Anaiah started on solids. So far there are no allergies and baby Anaiah's health is excellent.

Angelic and Marty decided that she would be taking a year off from work and stay home to care for the baby. As the first birthday quickly approaches, plans for the care of baby Anaiah have evolved. At first Mom's two younger sisters were going to care for the baby once Mom went back to work. Anaiah, though, has proven to be extremely attached to Mom, and will not stop crying if anyone else but her father and sister are in the house. According to Post, Hohmann & Epstein (2011), Anaiah is in the "clear-cut attachment" phase. Marty has changed his schedule as a conductor for the MTA and will be working nights so he can be home to care for Anaiah during the day while Mom is at work.

During this year Angelic has established a routine with Anaiah which seems to be working for both. (Longley and Gilken,2025) Angelic seems to be a disciplined person (perhaps from her years in the Navy), so I am not surprised that she would have a schedule for Anaiah. Baby tends to wake up around 6:30 A.M. and gets breastfed. They then do drop off at school for the older daughter. Once back home Anaiah will eat a solid breakfast consisting of fruit and yogurt. After breakfast there is playtime. Some of her favorite games are Peekaboo and building towers and knocking them down. She also loves singing while she claps. Her current favorite toys are teethers. She loves "touch and feel" books. While Mom feeds her breakfast, lunch and dinner are self-fed. Nap is around noon and lunch

follows. Angelic confessed that Anaiah's naps are mostly contact naps. Lunch and dinner consist of steamed veggies and some protein, like salmon or chicken. Broccoli is not her favorite, although she will eat it. She still gets a bottle in the afternoon, which Anaiah holds with one hand. There is more playtime in the afternoon and then it's time for school pick-up, dinner, bath, and bedtime, which happens around 7:30 P.M. Angelic dims the lights, turns on the noise machine to the ocean wave sounds, and holds Anaiah until she falls asleep. She sleeps in her crib at night, but not during the day. Anaiah's schedule would be easy to incorporate into a Program schedule. Her contact naps, however, may be a harder issue to deal with. Since she would be starting in a Program as a toddler (and they usually sleep on cots all at the same time), she may be persuaded to lay down and eventually nap.

The language spoken at home is English, even though Mom grew up in a Puerto Rican household. Her elders spoke Spanish but did not teach her to speak it. Angelic does not feel confident in her Spanish, although she understands some of it. While the language may be English, the culture is almost totally Hispanic. Dad is originally from the South, and he only speaks English. Their food, and taste in music is Latino. Anaiah has been taught some sign language words, like "mama," "papa." and "baby." Angelic's family has embraced Marty and the girls, and they are a tight-knit family. Most holidays are spent together either at Angelic's and Marty's apartment, or at Angelic's mother's apartment. Angelic and Marty want to bring up the girls in a different culture than they were. They talk to the girls about the true meaning of a holiday, and they do not believe in teaching the girls about Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny. Angelic described her parenting style as "more protective and honest than when she was raised." Marty and Angelic are individualists. They are following their own convictions when it comes to raising their daughters. To feel supported in a Program the infant/toddler teacher would need to be respectful of their child rearing beliefs. Having a primary caregiver at the Program is of utmost importance for both Anaiah and her parents, especially Angelic. Mom needs to be supported as she transitions to working full-time. Angelic is extremely distressed about leaving her daughter. These feelings Angelic is having are projected onto Anaiah, who in turn becomes more attached to Mom. Angelic needs assurance that she is a good mother, that she is doing what is best for her daughter, and that Anaiah will be cared for and loved at the Program. If the teacher can make Mom feel confident leaving Anaiah at the Program, Anaiah will have an easier time transitioning to the childcare Program. (Reschke,2021) Mom will also need more daily check-ins, photos, and the opportunity to drop-in whenever she can, (Kayser, 2017), and (Goldsmith and Theilheimer ,2015).

Anaiah has had a great first year being at home with her mother. Now that Mom is returning to work, she will be challenged to deal much more with Dad's parenting style. Will she adapt quickly? Evaluating the information Angelic gave me during our interview, and the observation I did on Anaiah, I can say that she is extremely cautious, with the kind of temperament that does not easily adapt to new situations. (Flexible fearful and feisty video). Anaiah seems to be in the "Practicing" stage of individuation, (Murphy ,2024) where she is separating from her mother, yet Mom remains her "secure base." However, taking into consideration that same information I could also say that it is the mother who has allowed Anaiah to be so extremely attached to her. In that context it may be easier for Anaiah if Mom is away for part of the day and Dad is in charge. If Anaiah were to go into a Program, she would need lots of reassurance as to when Mom and Dad are coming back. There would need to be lots of family pictures, a "lovey" from home, and a period of integration for her to be comfortable. That would be my main concern. As to their family's culture, I believe that it could be accommodated into a Program where holidays are not celebrated because babies and toddlers do not understand them anyway.

The day of the observation was Saturday, April 11, 2026, from 3:00-4:00 P.M. It took place at my house. Angelic texted me that her house was not available. I said that she could come over and she agreed. Mom and baby came over after Anaiah's nap. My husband and I greeted them at the door. Angelic was carrying Anaiah, Angelic's big water cup, and a medium size bin with toys. Anaiah was dressed in gray stretchy pants, a green t-shirt with white flowers all over, light blue socks, and soft shoes that looked exceptionally comfortable. Her curly brown hair was up in a high ponytail. She peered at the new scene with a "skeptical" look. My living room is long and narrow, as my house is over a hundred years old. Once you enter from the hallway there is a dining table and six chairs in front of two tall windows. To the left of the table there is a black-stone fireplace, original to the house, that is not in use. To the left of the fireplace there is a small wooden table, a brown sofa, and my husband's baby-grand black-lacquer piano. I knew they would be drawn to the piano. I invited them to sit and play. Angelic played a tune she remembered, while Anaiah looked at the keys and hit them at random. Mom then moved her to the right side of the piano so she could hear the difference in the sounds as Mom hit the keys. After about five minutes Anaiah was no longer interested in the piano so Angelic and her moved to sit on the wood floor in front of the sofa. I was trying to give Anaiah some space, so I sat on the sofa while Mom brought out the bin she brought from home. Anaiah promptly used her hands to take off the lid. The lid had latches on opposite sides, which Mom loosened. Her fine motor skills were on display as she used her fingers and hand strength to open the

bin's latch. During this whole time Anaiah was sitting first on her mother's lap, then on the floor, but making sure her back was always touching Mom. I had the idea of going into the kitchen and bringing out some things for her to play with. I brought a set of nesting bowls, a ¼ cup measuring plastic cup, and a wooden spoon. Anaiah was already playing with a set of stacking rubber teething rings. She immediately looked at the bowls and proceeded to dump her stacking rings into the medium-sized bowl. Mom showed her how to "stir" with the wooden spoon, and Anaiah imitated her perfectly by stirring with her right hand, in a clockwise motion. She held the wooden spoon at the top. This interaction with the bowl and the imitation of her mother showed Anaiah's curiosity and interest by "exploring, manipulating, and using her senses." (Peterson, 2012) Her imitation of the stirring also showed Anaiah's cognitive development.

Several things I noticed about Anaiah's play: she is great at imitating her mom, she sits up straight (gross motor skills), and has great balance, moves toys between her hands, turns her hands with easy movements of her wrists, and she problem-solves- as she worked out how to pull the stacking rings apart and put them back together. Angelic then started to sing "shake, shake, shake" and Anaiah shook the toy she was holding. I decided to sit on the floor near her but not too close to her and her mom. Anaiah proceeded to examine the smallest of the bowls, a blue bowl, and she turned it upside down, around, and finally put it on her head. Her curiosity gave way to a different play strategy, utilizing a toy in a different way. During most of the observation Anaiah was babbling as she played. I told Mom I thought she was singing "Row, row, row your boat," to which Mom replied that yes, Anaiah was indeed saying "Row." I started singing but Anaiah gave me a serious look, stood up on her tiptoes, straightened herself, all while using the sofa for support.

Angelic had brought a bottle of breast milk with her in the bin. At this time Anaiah took out the bottle, laid herself on Mom's lap, and held her own bottle while drinking. Angelic had also brought her own water bottle. When she finished feeding Anaiah, she stood up to get her water bottle. Anaiah quickly started crying and crawling towards Mom. Angelic sat down again. Before she could get to drink her water, Anaiah took the bottle from her and drank, sipping from the straw.

Anaiah continued babbling as she played, continuing to make sounds like "Ro." She moved further away from Mom. She stood up and let me touch her back with a toy alligator from her toy bin. She even laughed. As our time together wound down, my husband came down to get some water. He smiled at her and called her pretty and she smiled at him. Angelic tried to move away from Anaiah, but Anaiah followed her around with her eyes,

always knowing where Mom was at. Angelic play whispered to her and Anaiah whispered back. It was back to the piano for one last time. Anaiah was more open to playing this time and touched the keys with enough force to elicit sound, suggesting that her memory is developing and she is using her senses for information gathering. (Peterson, 2012) Lastly, it was time to say goodbye. It had been a long time since there was a baby in my house and I was glad to have invited them.

It was great to see a baby who is smart and doing so well in her physical and cognitive development. During this assignment I learned much more about observing babies, which I will use in my daily work. I also had the opportunity to get to know my neighbors better. I hope to keep up with Anaiah and her family as her mother goes back to work.

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